

Darien Sign Regulations

List Of Comments

931 – PURPOSE / APPLICABILITY		Page	Comment / Suggestion	Possible Action
	1. Eliminate the phrase “avoid regulating the content” but leave in the phrase “place restrictions on time, place, and manner”	3		Change Made
932 – DISTRICT CATEGORIZATION		Page	Comment / Suggestion	Possible Action
	2. No comments received	4		X
933 – SIGN MEASUREMENT		Page	Comment / Suggestion	Possible Action
	3. A suggestion was made to add a sketch showing how an awning sign would be measured.	5		Change Not Recommended
934 – WITHOUT PERMIT		Page	Comment / Suggestion	Possible Action
Basic Identification Signs	4. A suggestion was made to reword 934.1.b as “business / Office Zone Identification”	6		Change Made
	5. I don’t support explicit phrasing of “phone numbers and web address” signs can be used as an additional non permit sign	6		Edit Made
	6. I do not like such items as phone number, web site on any permanent signs.	6		Edit Made
Street Number Signs	7. The ARB requested that the regulations specifically call out that street number signs as required by Town Ordinance 66-6 are permitted under the sign regulations.	6		Change Made
Public Expression	8. Need to make it clear that Zoning does not deal with or regulate political signs.	6		No Change Needed
No Trespassing	9. A question was raised about whether the provisions on “no trespassing signs” were in the current regulations	6	Added in this regulation	No Change Needed
Real Estate Sign	10. In Section 934.3.a, would like to allow a commercial real estate sign to be larger than 4 SF	7	Staff indicates this has not been an issue	Change Not Recommended

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Landmark Sign	11. It was suggested that the 934.4.e (Historic Landmark Sign) state that the sign has been <u>approved</u> by the Architectural Review Board	8		Change Made
Interior Signage / Window Signage	12. It was suggested that the 934.5.b (Temporary Window Signs) state that it applies to signs hung within three feet <u>inside</u> a window"	8		Change Made
	13. Be clear that signs which are inside a building and not visible from the outside are exempt from these sign regulations	8		Change Made
	14. Consider doing more with regard to interior window signs	8		Change Made
	15. It was suggested that the 934.5.b (Temporary Window Signs) also include signs affixed <u>outside</u> a window	8		Change Made
	16. It was suggested that the 934.5.b (Temporary Window Signs) specifically indicate "lit or unlit" signs	8		Change Made
Vehicle Sign	17. It was suggested that the 934.5.c (Vehicle Signs) specifically indicate it applies to a <u>parked</u> vehicle	8		Change Made
NEW - Menu Box	18. A suggestion was made to allow a small "menu box" sign to be permitted for a restaurant in a pedestrian oriented district	8		Change Made
NEW – During Construction	19. Exempt internal directional signs when buildings on a site are open while construction is in process subject to approval of the Zoning Official	8		Change Made
Community Event Banner Signs	20. A question was raised about whether the banner signs for community events should be approved by Board of Selectmen	8		Change Made
935 – WITH PERMIT				Possible Action
General	21. A suggestion was made to identify the table as Section 935.A and then re-letter the remaining sections accordingly	9		Change Made
	22. An observation was made that the lettering in the table is incorrect and should be changed (perhaps using a numbering system that links to the gallery on the following pages)	9		Change Made
	23. A comment was made that the word "Business" is not needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in rows 1 and 2 of the table • in 935.B.1 and 935.B.2 	9 / 11		Change Made

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Change Made		9	Change to blue coloring	Change Made
Change Made	24. The pink coloring in line 12 should be explained (only applies to a fueling station) or use a blue color as for other entries	9		Change Made
Change Made	25. A suggestion was made to allow perpendicular blade signs in automobile-oriented districts	9		Change Made
Change Made	26. Consider allowing monument signs in office districts	9		Change Made
Comment	27. The current process of determining maximum sign area is only one limit to the actual size of the signs. The maximum letter/figure height and the limiting of the exterior sign to just the name of the business are other key factors that keep the size of the signs at an appropriate scale. If we eliminate or modify those other controls, the signs will get bigger and much more crowded with information and much less attractive.			Comment
Change Made	28. A suggestion was made to add the Municipal Use District (MU) to the sign table and add checkboxes for lines 1 and 13	9	Allowed all types of signs in Parking-Residential and in Municipal Use	Change Made
Change Made	29. I am a little confused about newly proposed business districts—for instance what would the Darien Library be categorized as and what regulations would be appropriate for this area? This could be a question for other areas of town as I can see what was once automobile-oriented business districts become more pedestrian-oriented.	9	See #28 above	Change Made
Change Made	30. Need to have a clear formulas and regulations for allowable sign area, number of signs, types of signs ... allowed on each type of sign.			Change Made
Comment	31. An observation was made that Subsection A limiting the number of signs “gets lost” in the current configuration. Is there a way to make this stand out more?	10		Comment
Change Made	32. The phrase “detached hanging sign” is used twice in Section 935.A but not elsewhere?	10	Clarified text	Change Made
Discuss?	33. A One detached hanging sign per property (vs building)?	10		Discuss?
Change Made	34. The items in Section 935.A should be numbered to facilitate reference.	10		Change Made

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		10		Change Made
Section 935.B.1 - Pedestrian	35. Perhaps the signs allowed in Office Districts in Section 935.A could be organized by bullets to make this clearer	10		Change Made
	36. In pedestrian-oriented districts, it was suggested that 0.33 SF of sign area per lineal foot of building frontage is <i>too small</i> and this should be increased (to 0.50 SF per lineal foot?)	11		Change Not Recommended
	37. In pedestrian-oriented districts, is 0.33 SF of signage for each 1 lineal foot of building frontage going to result in creating signs that are <i>too large</i> for the pedestrian oriented downtown storefronts? ...	11		Change Not Recommended
	38. I am troubled by proposed primary business wall signs maximum sign areas of 0.33 square foot to one lineal foot of building frontage is a <i>little large</i> .			Change Not Recommended
Section 935.B.1 - Automobile	39. In pedestrian-oriented districts, ... how do we establish a specific "not to exceed XX SF" recommendation?	11	Established a maximum of 40 SF	Discuss?
	40. The formula to allow one square foot of sign for each 1 lineal foot of building frontage in the auto oriented zones will allow for <i>much larger signs</i> than we currently permit.			Change Made
	41. In automobile-oriented districts, it was suggested that 1.00 SF of sign area per lineal foot of building frontage is <i>too big</i> and this should be decreased (to 0.67 SF per lineal foot?)	11		Change Made
	42. I think there should be a maximum size listed here (secondary sign below lists a maximum of 6 sqft).		Established a maximum of 60 SF	Change Made
	43. Would love ARB to suggest max square footage for automobile district ..., which are currently highlighted blank ... Elsewhere it suggests 12 sqft for auto...		Established a maximum of 60 SF	Change Made
	44. The design parameters for sign area in a car-oriented district (i.e. Post Rd near Shake Shack) could be larger, at 1SF for each lineal foot, but how do we establish a specific "not to exceed XX SF" recommendation?	11	Established a maximum of 60 SF	Change Made
	45. Make sure we have an upper limit on sign area for <i>all signs</i> so that we do not lose all control		Established a maximum of 60 SF	Change Made
	46. It was suggested that the maximum sign size in an automobile-oriented district should be 50 SF	11	Established a maximum of 60 SF	Change Made

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Change Made		
Comment		
Change Not Recommended	<p>47. A suggestion was made to allow a secondary wall sign in a pedestrian-oriented district when the business is adjacent to a pedestrian walkway connecting rear parking areas to a street and the business has a functioning entry on that pedestrian walkway</p> <p>48. I am troubled by ... Six square feet for secondary signs with the ability to combine both primary and secondary seems large ...</p> <p>49. A suggestion was made to allow a secondary wall sign in a pedestrian-oriented district when the property contains a certain number of private parking spaces</p>	<p>11</p> <p>11</p>
Comment	<p>50. Is the 7 foot clearance below perpendicular blade signs adequate?</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Has not been an issue</p>
Change Made	<p>51. I think there should be max height from street restriction</p>	<p>12</p>
Comment	<p>52. An observation was made that it is "almost impossible" to get written permission for a sign to project into the road right-of-way (perpendicular blade, awning, etc.)</p>	<p>12</p>
Change Made	<p>53. It was suggested that the maximum sign size for an awning sign in an automobile-oriented district should be 50 SF</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Established a maximum of 40 SF Established a maximum of 60 SF</p>
Change Made	<p>54. Would love ARB to suggest max square footage for ... awnings, which are currently highlighted blank. ... Elsewhere it suggests 12 sqft for auto...</p>	
Change Made	<p>55. 30% of window coverage of a permanent window sign also seems excessive unless greater distance from the road is involved.</p>	<p>Changed to 25 percent per window and clarified that must be etched glass</p>
Change Made	<p>56. Now allowed 30% coverage? Thought current coverage was 25% which already seemed excessive.</p>	<p>See #54 above</p>
Change Made	<p>57. Should a directory sign (inside a building lobby or outside a building) should be exempted if it is not legible from a public street</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Clarified wording</p>

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<p>Section 935.C.2 – Monument Signage</p>	<p>58. Sign area is not restricted if the sign is located inside building and not legible from the street. I think this concept needs clarification It is meant to refer to lobby directory tenant signage with a maximum of 6 SF, but could it open the door to unanticipated design proposals such as giant lighted mural signs on the interior?</p> <p>59. A question was raised about why a monument sign for a hotel is allowed to be larger than for any other type of use</p> <p>60. Just hoping we don't get any hotels in town. 50 sqft max area proposed!?</p> <p>61. What are present regulations for hotel monument and pole signs 50 sq feet seems very large</p> <p>62. Monument signs also seems large.</p> <p>63. A question was raised about whether more standards are needed for a second monument sign</p>	<p>14</p> <p>15</p> <p>15</p> <p>15</p> <p>15</p> <p>15</p>	<p>Scenario describes a sign legible from the street?</p> <p>Delete hotel references</p> <p>Second monument sign option deleted</p>	<p>Change Made</p> <p>Change Made</p> <p>Change Made</p> <p>Change Made</p> <p>Change Made</p> <p>Change Made</p>
<p>Section 935.C.3 – Pole Signage</p>	<p>64. A suggestion was made to allow "pylon signs" (a vertical monument sign) as an alternative to a pole sign</p>	<p>16</p>	<p></p>	<p>Change Made</p>
<p>Section 935.C.5 – Gas Price Signage</p>	<p>65. It was suggested to allow for gas price signs larger than six SF (are there State requirements for such signs?)</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>Allowed larger sign</p>	<p>Change Made</p>
<p>Section 935.D.1 – Other Signage</p>	<p>66. A suggestion was made to not call such signs "Special Permit Use" signs</p> <p>67. A suggestion was made to not call out "place of worship" since it might open up RLUJA issues</p> <p>68. Would love to give more thought [multi-family development signs] - foresee getting more of these in future with all the new town development projects.</p> <p>69. A suggestion was made to allow temporary business promotion signs more often and/or for longer periods</p> <p>70. Interest was expressed in allowing for A-frame and similar signage on a temporary basis for special promotions) if not in a pedestrian-oriented district, could they be allowed in an automobile-oriented district?)</p>	<p>18</p> <p>18</p> <p>18</p> <p>19</p> <p>19</p>	<p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p>	<p>Change Made</p> <p>Change Made</p> <p>Change Made</p> <p>Comment Only</p> <p>Change Made</p>
				<p>Change Not Recommended</p>

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Special Signage	19??	Comment / Suggestion	Possible Action
936 – ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS			
Section 936.1 – Design Guidelines	20		Change Made
Section 936.1 – Letter Height	20		Discuss
71. The Chamber of Commerce might want a provision allowing “business directory signs” in a pedestrian-oriented district such as at the train station(s) or at key street corner locations (there was a related question about whether this could be a “TV-type sign” with the panel not visible from the street so that the directory map could be managed electronically rather than replacing the sign panel when there is a business change)	19??	PZC has allowed in the past. Could allow such a sign installed and managed by the Chamber of Commerce by PZC approval	
72. A suggestion was made to change 936.1.b to encourage uniform design and placement of signs <u>for all uses</u> (not just integrated shopping centers)	20		
73. ZBA felt they might want to advocate for some upper limit on letter height	20		
74. Perhaps I missed this, but I did not see any regulations defining a measurement on the height/width of letters or numbers.	20		
75. Need to have a clear formulas and regulations for ... letter / figure size allowed on each type of sign.	20		
76. Other than directory signs, none of signs parameters list height requirement of letters or logos ...	20		
77. It is written that ARB “ <u>may consider</u> ” the width, height and letter height” This is very vague without any regulations. Without specifics on letter/number height, I feel we will have a very disjointed frontage in our town centers.	20	PZC should discuss issue of letter height. Staff suggests PZC might consider modifying the letter height <u>limitation to 24”</u>	
78. would like to see more specifics as to letter height in relation to the distance to street and traffic speed.	20	Current draft has letter height as a guideline when sign goes to ARB.	
79. There was some concern that giving up limitations on letter height may result in unforeseen consequences	20		
80. Should language be added indicating that the ARB <u>may</u> limit letter height?	20		
81. A suggestion was made that any sign lettering that exceeds 15” should have to go to the ARB unless it was approved as part of a sign theme	20? 25?		

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	82. A question was raised about what other communities regulate signs by letter height		Southbury (15' max., can be modified by a PDD) Fairfield (24"-36" <i>minimum</i> letter height, may be reduced in pedestrian areas) Greenwich (18") There may be others	Comment Only
Section 936.2 – Sign Theme	83. A suggestion was made that it might be helpful to have a "model sign theme package" available to educate sign applicants	20		Comment Only
Section 936.3 – Sign Content	84. #936 p. 20 - 2c this paragraph is confusing to me	20	Text deleted	Change Made
	85. p. 21 3. sign content —what does non-commercial content refer to?	21		Comment Only
	86. Need to make it clear that Zoning does not deal with or regulate political signs.	21?		Comment Only
Section 936.4 – Sign Location	87. A suggestion was made to add "or presents a hazard to vehicular or pedestrian traffic" to Section 936.4.b	21		Change Made
	88. Need to make it clear who can allow and regulate signs on public property and street right of way. If should not be Zoning.	21?	Any sign in a street right-of-way needs Town or State approval	Comment Only
	89. A suggestion was made to add "or greatest distance practicable" to Section 936.5.b	21		Change Not Recommended
	90. Merge this with Section 936.4 since all deal with sign location?	21		Change Made
Section 936.5 – External Illumination	91. Require that sign lighting be the same degree Kelvin or not exceed a certain degree Kelvin	21		
	92. A suggestion was made to clarify "white light" in Section 936.5.a since this is not very specific with regard to LED or other types of light <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm white = 2700K to 3500K • Natural white = 3500K to 4500K • Daylight white (crisp and clear) = 5000K to 6000K • Cool/cold white = 6000K to 7000K 	21	Or require that degree Kelvin be stated so that it can be managed	Discuss

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	21		Comment Only
Section 936.6 – Internal Illumination	21	93. An observation was made that LED bulbs are becoming the preferred method of sign illumination and that other approaches are being discontinued for the most part	
	22	94. A suggestion was made to list “halo lit” and “channel letter” (face-lit and face/side lit) as separate items for clarity in Section 936.6	Change Made
	22	95. A suggestion was made to make “face/side channel letters” go to ARB for approval (flush channel letters might not need to go to ARB?)	Change Made
	22	96. A suggestion was made to add the phrase “box sign” to Section 936.6a. for clarity	Change Made
	22	97. A question was raised about why an internally illuminated sign in a pedestrian-oriented district should require a 2/3rds majority vote of the ARB – shouldn’t a simple majority be sufficient?	Change Made
	22	98. A question was raised about neon signs (or faux neon signs) and whether the regulations should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow one or more per business • Continue to say they cannot move or flash • Prohibit such signs within a certain distance of a window 	Discuss
	22	99. Since neon signs are visible even if more than 3 feet from a window, should they be prohibited if they are visible and legible from the street?	Staff / Consultant request guidance
Section 936.9 – Possible Area Increase	23	100.A suggestion was made that Section 936.9 should be reworded for clarity	Change Made
	23	101.Any adjustment of sign size due to setback from street [should be] subject to ARB review and approval	Change Made
	23	102.A suggestion was made that Section 936.9 should also require approval by ARB	Change Made
	23	103.A question was raised about whether buildings set back far from the street in a pedestrian-oriented district could also get a larger sign	Change Made

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937 – PROHIBITED SIGNS		Page	Comment / Suggestion	Possible Action
Section 937 – Prohibited Signs	104. It would be good to list types of signs that are prohibited/not allowed.	24	This is what this Section does	Comment Only
	105. Need to deal with new types of signs such as animated signs, TV or monitor displays in windows, projected laser display, LED display, gas station price signs, drone or floating signs, and projected light signs.	24?	This is what this Section does	Comment Only
	106. A suggestion was made that there should be a comma between "intermittent" and "light" in the first line of Section 937.	24		Change Made
	107. An observation was made that the numbering in Section 937 should be numbers (not lower case letters) for consistency	24		Change Made
	108. A suggestion was made that Section 937.4 should clarify that it includes "lighting of windows" or "lighting of interior spaces" or anything else that "functions as a sign"	24		Change Made
938 – APPROVAL PROCEDURES		Page	Comment / Suggestion	Possible Action
	109. Comments were generally favorable with regard towards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a simplified process for pre-defined signs • a simplified process for approval of a sign theme 	25		Comment Only
	110. Making the approval process quicker and easier would be okay for some limited number of situations, but the current process does result in better designs that are functional and attractive.	25		Comment
	111. Process for most signs will still involve ARB because most businesses are not part of a 'Themed' shopping center or consolidated development.	25		Comment

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	<p>112.Regarding the concept of zoning staff approval of signage without ARB review if the sign is "practically identical" to previous signs: ... I think this could be a possible solution, but only for buildings which already have adopted a signage master plan with a specific list of approved signage requirements and options.</p> <p>Otherwise, "practically identical" is an ambiguous phrase which needs clarification, as it could be subject to a wide variety of interpretations. I think the concept of a zoning official approval of a sign design that is "consistent with a sign theme approved by the ARB" may not be a reliable solution, unless we create sign regulations [approve sign themes?] that are highly specific as to size, color, graphics, materials, etc. in various downtown districts and neighborhoods.</p>	25	<p>Occupants will have choices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff approval of "practically identical" • Staff approval based on pre-approved signage master plan • Approval by ARB 	Comment
	<p>113. There is a reference to a "sign theme" that is approved by the ARB, and if any sign follows this theme a permit can be issued by a Zoning Official. With all the new construction coming to Darien, it is understandable that replicating a theme will speed up the approval process, but if ARB decides on a theme I think ARB has to be very specific as to all of the details, lettering, size, color etc.</p>	25		Comment
	<p>114.A suggestion was made to review Section 938.1 for clarity and consistency</p>	25		Change Made
	<p>115.Replacement signs for new or replacement business should be made to comply with regulations in effect at that time. Many old signs were installed without proper approval or variances. If they do not comply with the regulations in effect at the time they are to be changed, they should not be grandfathered or be given any legal status or favorable treatment.</p>	25	Recent change in State law seems to preclude this	Change Not Recommended
	<p>116.A suggestion was made to coordinate this Section with the Section on non-conformities for clarity and consistency</p>	25		Comment
	<p>117.A question was raised about the use of the word "abandoned"</p>	25	Word was used on purpose so that applicant states intent to not revert to prior sign in the future and signs become more conforming over time	Comment

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Change Made				Change Made
	118-A suggestion was made to add a requirement in Section 938 that a non-conforming sign must be made "more conforming" in order to get a sign permit from the Zoning Official, otherwise it goes to the ARB	25		
	119. Some towns allow for replacement signage by a simpler process if it meets a majority of criteria such as four of the following six criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size • Font • Color • Type • Lighting • More Conforming 	25		Comment
	120.A question was raised about whether a replacement sign has to be the same exact dimensions or could it be the same area but different dimensions?	25		Change Made
XXX – POSSIBLE OPTION				
	121. An observation was made that the ZBA is not used to dealing in "non-hardship" situations and this might be a challenge	26		
	122. An observation was made that the PZC is not used to dealing with individual sign requests and this might be a burden on their workload	26		
	123. The PZC's ZBA's sign criteria written here is described by word "harmony", "orderly development" "attractive" and "suitable". These are all in the "eyes of the beholder" and if these criteria are done by only one person this could vary with the each person giving the permit and could create uneven vision impressions.	26	Section deleted	Change Made
	124.p. 26 Possible option c. and d. ???	26		
	125. Pg 26. New possible approval procedure eliminates ARB from sign approval all together?	26		

DEFINITION		Page	Comment / Suggestion	Possible Action
	126. Think somewhere it needs to be stated what “inside the building” means for wall sign size and illumination standards. We touched on this in last meeting. Don’t see it listed here but there are exceptions to all the rules if sign is “inside building”.	277		Comment
GENERAL / ENFORCEMENT		Page	Comment / Suggestion	Possible Action
	127. The issue of enforcement (and lack of enforcement) on signs came up			
	128. The possible benefit of a citation ordinance for zoning enforcement was discussed but this was recognized as a separate, but related, issue		Issue of zoning enforcement and a citation ordinance can be addressed separately	Comment
GENERAL / OTHER		Page	Comment / Suggestion	Possible Action
	129. There was some concern that giving up some practices on sign content may result in unforeseen consequences			Comment
	130. There was some concern about changing the sign regulations but also some relief from the task of reviewing individual signs over and over again			Comment

Are there any other changes you feel are desirable?

As a next step, would the Commission like to:

- **schedule a public information meeting to get additional feedback, or**
- **move towards a public hearing on adoption?**

